

AAIB Bulletin No: 7/95

Ref: EW/G95/04/18

Category: 3

Aircraft Type and Registration: Thunder AX10-160, G-ONPI

No & Type of Engines: Two 'burners'

Year of Manufacture: 1990

Date & Time (UTC): 1 April 1995 at 0620 hrs

Location: Northend Farm, Chiddingfold, Surrey

Type of Flight: Public Transport

Persons on Board: Crew - 1 Passengers - 7

Injuries: Crew - None Passengers - None

Nature of Damage: Balloon destroyed

Commander's Licence: Commercial Pilot's Licence

Commander's Age: 37 years

Commander's Flying Experience: 846 hours (of which 255 were on type)
Last 90 days - 2 hours
Last 28 days - 1 hour

Information Source: Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot

The wind was light and the balloon was being flown from a 200 metre by 100 metre field, with 40 to 50 foot high trees at the downwind end. During the lift-off, despite using the second burner, it was apparent to the pilot that the balloon was not climbing as expected and was not going to rise above the trees. She therefore pulled the 'rip line' to abandon the takeoff, but the basket struck the trees some 10 to 20 feet above the ground and then fell as the envelope deflated.

The envelope was destroyed whilst disentangling it from the upper branches.